

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 12TH DECEMBER 2016

SUBJECT OF REPORT: GENERAL PRACTITIONER (GP) PROVISION IN WESTON-SUPER-MARE

TOWN OR PARISH: N/A

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: COUNCILLOR ROZ WILLIS, CHAIRMAN OF THE PANEL

KEY DECISION: N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel:

- (1) agree the establishment of a Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) task and finish Working Group to undertake a full scrutiny review in to the provision of GP services in Weston-super-Mare;
- (2) consider and agree the aims, scope, timescale and desired outcome(s) of this working group; and
- (3) agree the Membership of the working group.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

Following ongoing monitoring undertaken by the Panel's Primary Care Champions and in response to increasing public concern (as highlighted at the recent Council meeting on 8th November), it has been proposed that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel undertake a full scrutiny review of the provision of GP services in Weston-super-Mare.

2. POLICY

The Panel's remit is to review and scrutinise the provision of health services in North Somerset, supporting the Council's vision of "a great place to live where people, businesses and communities flourish. Modern, efficient services and a strong voice for North Somerset".

3. DETAILS

Against a backdrop of an increasing population and demographic challenges, particularly around North Somerset's growing ageing population and health inequalities focussed in central Weston-super-Mare, the Panel has had mounting cause for concern about General Practice (GP) provision across North Somerset and particularly in central Weston-super-Mare.

The recently publicised pressures faced by Graham Road and Stafford Place surgeries follow on the back of a sequence of concerning developments in the provision of primary care health services in central Weston-super-Mare – notably the closure of the walk-in service (GP-led Healthcare Centre) at Weston General Hospital in 2012 and subsequent closure of the Boulevard Health Centre in 2013. It was partly in response to these issues that the Panel nominated two primary care “champions” from its membership, to develop closer links with primary care commissioners and to more closely monitor GP services in the district.

The issue of primary care provision was brought into particular focus at the recent Council meeting on 8th November. Following representations at that meeting from the Chairmen of the Graham Road and Stafford Place PPGs about the significant pressures facing GP services in Weston-super-Mare, Councillor Richard Nightingale, referred to concerns that primary care services were stretched beyond breaking point and proposed that the issue be referred to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel for investigation. Also one of the Panel’s primary care champions, Councillor Mike Bell, referred to what he felt was a lack of clarity in the planning process around the provision of wider community assets including GP services in Weston-super-Mare.

In the light of increasing public concern about these highly valued local services, the Panel is asked to consider undertaking a full scrutiny review of GP provision in Weston-super-Mare.

4. CONSULTATION

N/A

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

N/A

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Equality and diversity issues are a mandatory consideration in decision making in the Council pursuant to the Equality Act 2010. Health partners as relevant public bodies must similarly discharge their duties under the Act and consideration of equalities issues should be addressed in their reports.

8. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

9. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

AUTHOR

Leo Taylor, Scrutiny Officer
01934 634621 leo.taylor@n-somerset.gov.uk